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PRIORITY THEMES

PEACE: WOMEN AND THE PEACE PROCESS

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The Commission on the Status of Women, at its thirty-fourth session, selected the issue of "Women and the peace process" as the priority theme in the area of peace for consideration at its thirty-seventh session in 1993. The present report notes at the outset that women are virtually absent from the peace process at the official level. It addresses two polar questions: what the role of women has been both in the peace process through non-governmental channels and in the military. It concludes that considerable influence has been exerted by the efforts of non-governmental organizations, which have not yet affected official processes. It notes that women have always been part of the military but that neither in the past nor in the present do they participate on an equal basis, leaving the military as the one remaining male institutional bastion. The report suggests new issues to be investigated.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its thirty-fourth session held in 1990, selected women and the peace process as one of its priority themes under the objective of peace to be considered at its thirty-seventh session to be held in 1993.

2. The importance of the participation of women in various aspects of the peace process, such as conflict resolution, international cooperation, multilateral and bilateral negotiations and disarmament efforts, was stated in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. 1/ The Forward-looking Strategies emphasized in particular the need for the active participation of women in the promotion of international peace and cooperation at the decision-making level on an equitable basis. The first review and appraisal of the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies in 1990 concluded that: "Despite the progress made in some areas, international, regional and national conflicts persist, and women continue to number among their main victims. At the same time, women are no more prominent among those making decisions on conflict than in the past." Recommendation XX stated that:

> "Governments should be encouraged to increase the participation of women in the peace process at the decision-making level, including them as part of delegations to negotiate international agreements relating to peace and disarmament and establishing a target for the number of women participating in such delegations.
>
> "The United Nations and the international non-governmental organizations concerned should continue to monitor and support women's increased involvement in the peace process."

3. The maintenance of peace requires both might and right. These must be congruent: without might, justice is vulnerable; without right, force is terrible.

4. Citizens contribute to the peace process in three ways. The first is to focus primarily on ending or preventing war, which is often done through non-governmental peace organizations that are committed to non-violent forms of action. Women have been highly active in these organizations. The second is to use force or the threat of force to make or keep peace. To date, women have played only a limited role in this process, which emphasizes might, the military and the executive branch of government. The third is to accept a temporary and limited peace-keeping role between adversaries. The United Nations has been accepting increased responsibility of this kind. Women have had a variable role in this process.

5. The present report reviews the important role that women have long played in non-governmental peace efforts. It discusses the reasons why they have played such a limited role in the efforts that use force. Finally, it reviews the potential role of women in United Nations peace-keeping and the value of increasing their use in the future.

I. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PEACE

6. Women's participation in non-governmental activities related to peace has been long, strong and visible. Women's peace activities have evolved in recent

history, taking various forms, changing focus and priorities and emerging in different regions but always clearly conveying women's dissatisfaction and concern with the state of international and national affairs related to peace. The resort of women to primarily grass-roots, non-governmental activities indicates that existing structures do not provide for an articulation between Governments and women's interests and views. Thus, women have had to seek non-governmental means to make their views known or to press their goals.

A. Women's peace organizations in history

7. The richness of women's activities related to peace is reflected in numerous examples found in history. Looking at the past 150 years, the first all-women's national societies were founded in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America between 1820 and 1830. By 1852, the Olive Leaf circles were issuing the first international women's publication entitled "Sisterly Voices". Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, following much social upheaval, women's peace organizations sprang up all over Europe and an international network of women was created with members from many European countries as well as Japan, the United States and Polynesia. Towards the end of the century, some women, such as Clara Zetkin and Rosa Luxemburg, became particularly visible in promoting the ideas of non-violence, sisterhood and a rejection of nationalism, chauvinism and war. Bertha von Suttner of Austria, author of the book Lay Down your Arms!, inspired Alfred Nobel to establish the peace prize that bears his name, and she was the first woman to receive it, in 1905.

8. Since then, eight other women have received the same prize: Jane Addams (1931), Emily Greene Balch (1946), Mairead Corrigan and Betty Williams (1976), Mother Teresa (1979), Alva Reimer Myrdal (1982), Aung San Suu Kyi (1991) and Rigoberta Menchu (1992). It is worth noting that a higher percentage of women have been awarded the Peace Prize than any other Nobel Prize and that most of the awards were made within the past 20 years.

9. Women's participation in peace activities became most visible on the eve of the First World War. Many women both feared and strongly opposed the forthcoming hostilities. As a result, they became involved in traditional pacifist movements. In addition, some founded separate women's organizations aimed at the preservation of peace. One was the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, with the goals of disarmament and peace based on justice. The group of convenors of the League comprised a number of highly distinguished women.

10. Between 1900 and 1915, three other women's organizations focused on international relations were created. By 1930, three more international relations groups had been established as well as 10 professional organizations. All of these organizations, including the already existing international educational associations for women, had international peace as a primary concern.

11. The unprecedented damage to the civilian population during the Second World War led to another wave of strong anti-war feeling and opened a post-war era of peace-related activities. The women's organizations were especially strong in Europe and Japan, the regions most damaged by the War, and they focused on activities against war and especially against nuclear armaments.

12. Until the late 1960s, the mainstream of women's peace activities remained largely Eurocentric. The activities were carried out mainly through traditional

non-governmental structures and most activists were women from industrialized countries. However, with decolonization, national liberation and the creation of new independent States, often severely affected by armed conflicts, the participation of women from developing countries in the peace movement at national, regional and international levels began to increase. That fact, together with general trends in the world, put new issues such as development, the new international economic order, the environment, the struggle against apartheid and against violence in all its forms on the agenda for the 1970s. Education for peace expanded its purview. The new global understanding mobilized many professional people, religious groups, environmental activists, as well as women, who brought to the movement new thinking and alternative approaches to peace. Thus, since the 1970s, the movement has been called by many the "new peace movement".

B. The new peace movement

13. The new peace movement seeks to protect the environment, to ensure a more just distribution of resources and to create a democratic society. It is therefore not a movement that is focused on a single issue. Many female scholar members have sought to develop a holistic analysis of the interrelationships between various world problems. They have also focused on violence, whether it be personal, domestic, within the home, within the nation or between nations, as the core of world problems. Women have concluded that what is needed is another kind of society where all human beings could find the opportunity of fulfilling themselves as human beings without exploiting others. They have argued that the male-dominated, consumerist, competitive, militaristic culture should be changed. Gradually, instead of being primarily followers in organizations led by men, women have begun to play decisive roles in the new peace movement. Their contribution has become visible in terms of both activities and theory.

14. From the 1970s, the universality of the new peace movement and women's contribution to it meant increasing diversity in terms of forms, issues and methods of work. New grass-roots organizations and even less formal movements began to appear all over the world. In Europe and North America, the emphasis remained on disarmament (particularly nuclear disarmament) and security and cooperation in a divided Europe. Although women's peace-related activities in the East were confined to an official institutional structure and most of the activities and initiatives in the West were coming from unauthorized, grass-root organizations, they started using détente to develop closer cooperation between women from East and West and to promote common initiatives such as workshops, peace marches, exhibitions and educational programmes. They also developed a strong interest in the environment and made it one of their priorities. Another matter that attracted women's attention was education for peace. Also in the 1970s, the women's movement in the West started to be influenced strongly by feminist ideas. Some of these advocated radical changes in attitudes about global issues and some linked what was perceived as women's traditional oppression to the existence of patriarchy and to structural violence.

15. In developing countries, women's organizations were involved in global issues such as disarmament, the arms trade, development and a clean environment, but were also concerned with emerging local issues. For example, the women's movement in Latin America was greatly occupied with the defence of human's rights and eliminating violence against women.

16. The United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (1976-1985) provided an important opportunity for the further development of women's peace activities. During the Decade, women met to exchange experience and to strengthen the dialogue between women from East and West and North and South. This was manifested in the Peace Tent in the NGO Forum organized parallel to the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace held in 1985. These discussions focused on a wide range of topics related to peace, including justice, women's rights, disarmament, and the elimination of violence and oppression.

17. In the face of international, regional and internal tensions and conflicts, debt, the environment, the widening gap between the world's rich and poor, refugees, starvation, illiteracy and the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), the women's peace movement has augmented its efforts to seek comprehensive alternative solutions that would increase attention to the justice that must underpin any lasting peace. Thus, it has not only expanded its concern for what is "right", but it has also begun to reflect on "might", and to address the elimination of all discrimination against women in decision-making and in the enforcement of decisions as crucial to a lasting peace.

18. With the end of the cold war between East and West, more attention is being given to the eradication of violence in all its forms. Women's rights and women's role in governance are on the agenda as well. Owing to the extreme poverty found in some parts of the world, and the national and ethnic conflicts in others, interest in the situation of refugees and migrants, humanitarian assistance, conflict resolution and peace-keeping is increasing. There is an increased realization that women should participate in the process of formulating and implementing the policies that affect them. Also, the new role of peace-making, which is not at all the same as war-making, demands attention and the contribution of all.

C. Actions taken by women's peace groups

19. Many women have consistently rejected the build-up of arms and militarization. After the explosion of nuclear weapons at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, women were among the leaders of the anti-nuclear movement. Anti-nuclear campaigns demanded a ban on all nuclear weapons, including their testing, development and proliferation. Women from various professions became involved. For example, the work of a bio-statistician, Rosalie Bertell and a physicist, Helen Caldicott, focused on the present and long-term dangers from radiation. A group of women formed the European Movement of Women against Nuclear Armament, held conferences, organized protests against nuclear proliferation and petitioned the Secretary-General U Thant. Some observers "... give a large measure of credit to women and women's organizations for amassing the political support which led to the negotiation and ratification of that [the nuclear-test ban of 1963] treaty". 2/

20. Although almost completely absent from government delegations, women played a major role in organizing public opinion for the special sessions of the General Assembly on disarmament held in 1978, 1982 and 1988. They distributed literature and organized exhibitions, workshops, information campaigns and demonstrations. They also sought to talk to the delegations in order to bring to their attention women's concerns and perspectives on disarmament.

21. Because of their concern with the tremendous waste of resources for armaments, women were also among the main organizers of the NGO Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development held at Stockholm in 1987 in preparation for the International Conference on the subject, organized by the United Nations in the same year. The statement adopted by the NGO Conference stated that "... the development issue should be reformulated to correct mistaken, paternalistic and misleading notions of development which are divorced from the reality ..." and concluded that there was no alternative to just participatory development as well as to disarmament, general and complete. Women from the NGO Committee on Disarmament at United Nations Headquarters in New York took advantage of the convening of "a panel of eminent personalities" by the Secretary-General, chaired by Inga Thorsson, and organized in 1986 a public forum to discuss the issues of development and disarmament.

22. Women's organizations, female activists and women demonstrating for peace did not associate military capacity, the stockpiling of weapons of mass destruction and the balance of terror with peace-keeping. Many, in fact, rejected "armed peace" and demanded fundamental changes in international and national norms. Women carried out a variety of protest actions. An example is the movement, Women for Peace, which developed spontaneously and simultaneously in Denmark, Finland and Norway. In Denmark, in January 1980, three housewives came together and discussed their concern about a new generation of nuclear weapons that were to be stationed in Denmark. They decided to circulate a petition. Six months later the petition had been signed by half a million women in Scandinavia and was presented to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, held in 1980. Other actions of Women for Peace included international peace marches: the first, in 1981, from Copenhagen through the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium to Paris; the second one, from Stockholm through Finland, Leningrad and Moscow to Minsk. This latter action was the first joint initiative of the independent peace movement from the West and the Soviet Women's Committee and Peace Committee. The third march started in Oslo and continued from New York to Washington, D.C. In 1982, women launched a campaign of collecting signatures for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the Nordic countries. They gathered together 2.5 million names. The Conference of Nordic Women for Peace in 1983, organized jointly with Soviet and American women, was unanimous in arguing that nuclear weapons had no borders, and that women had no say about their States' military although they were affected by it.

23. When Women for Peace was started in Scandinavia, its women founders did not know about other actions like the creation of the Women for Peace Movement in Switzerland in 1976, of Strike for Peace in the United States in 1964 or of Another Mother for Peace, also in the United States. The programmatic basis of the movement in Switzerland illustrates its non-governmental approach in its rejection of weapons of mass destruction and its emphasis on a moral principle that resources should not be wasted on armaments but that they should be directed to education, development or health care. The American Peace Links movement works on a similar principle by emphasizing that political changes without changes in moral and social norms are but temporary victories. Women and Peace, the movement for peace in Latin America, focuses on the prevention of a nuclear catastrophe, the need for disarmament, tolerance, education for peace and action against violence.

24. Women traditionally march for peace on 8 March. For example, in 1983, women from the United States and all parts of Europe gathered in Brussels to

lobby representatives of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and ambassadors of the States members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization against the deployment of new kinds of weapons. In West Berlin, women made a human chain between the embassies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States. In the 1980s, in the United Kingdom, women camped at Greenham Common Air Force Base, demanding a public discussion of nuclear issues and opposing the installation of new nuclear weapons.

25. Women supported a Swedish initiative, the Great Peace Journey, which raised five questions for the consideration of the Member States. The questions addressed the issues of limiting the use of national forces to self-defence, totally banning weapons of mass destruction, banning the export of weapons, distributing the world's resources more equally and resolving conflicts peacefully. A 10-day Nordic Forum, held at Oslo in 1988, brought together 10,000 women. Women also became active for peace through various religious groups and organizations. Evangelischer Frauenbund der Schweiz constitutes an interesting example of such activities, focusing on a critical assessment of various aspects of peace, the security policy of Switzerland and the concept of the responsibility of citizens.

26. Women's peace activities have involved a direct struggle against publically supported or condoned violence. Examples are varied and include such instances as the silent demonstrations of Argentinean women at Plaza de Mayo against the mass "disappearances" of people during the period of a military government; the participation of women in the Philippines, including nuns, in peaceful efforts to overthrow the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos by stopping tanks deployed to attack rebelling troops; efforts to end hostilities in the regions of former Yugoslavia in 1991, including demonstrations by mothers and wives of soldiers in Croatia.

27. In other cases, women have sought to create their own channels to seek reconciliation between forces that are in conflict. For example, during the last decade, women from both parts of Cyprus organized a number of joint meetings and seminars aimed at the development of dialogue instead of hostility at the community level and promotion of understanding despite the division of the island. Similarly, joint meetings between Israeli and Palestinian women were, for many years, the only peaceful organized contact between those two peoples. And women of all races joined together in the struggle against apartheid, both in South Africa and internationally.

28. In sum, women are affected by foreign policy and security concerns, and have been active in trying to affect policy. They express themselves, organize, and try to persuade others to do "right". They have not used "might", violent or non-violent, to affect the decisions of those who actually control the means of force. Some are committed to only using non-violence; others do not wish to use force themselves but wish to affect it. Others would be willing to assume responsibility for exercising legitimate force - "might" that supports "right" - but have had no opportunity of doing so.

D. Education for peace

29. Women have also made an intellectual contribution to the public understanding of the issues and problems involved in peace and disarmament. For example, Alva Myrdal of Sweden has demonstrated the ineffectiveness of years of negotiation; Scilla McLean of the United Kingdom has shed light on the process of nuclear weapons decision-making and women's exclusion from that

decision-making; Inga Thorsson of Sweden has made clear that while women, the poor and the vulnerable suffer most, the quality of life for all is reduced by arms spending; and Ruth Leger Sivard of the United States, through her annual reports entitled World Military and Social Expenditures, has presented the latest statistics on arms spending in human terms, demonstrating how many human needs could not be met because of that expense.

30. Female researchers have sought the common roots of all forms of violence, which can range from family and personal violence to war, its best organized and most destructive form. They have noted that violence penetrates different cultures; in daily life, it takes various forms, such as blows, racial epithets and other verbal insults, physical assaults and torture, rape, disappearances and military attacks on an "enemy" community. Violence is sometimes used as a means to demonstrate power to maintain social or family order and to exercise or restore authority. Both men and women are victims of violence but women additionally experience violence that is gender specific, particularly violent sexual abuse, often by men who are armed while they are unarmed, and almost always by men who are physically larger than they are. The violence that women suffer in normal times is intensified by war. Rape and abuse is often present in the arrest, detention and interrogation of female prisoners.

31. Originally an official policy in countries in Eastern Europe, the idea of education for peace was taken up, in both theory and practice, by the women's movement and peace researchers in Europe and North America. Women in the peace movement realized that women everywhere play a specific role in education for peace. As parents, care providers and often as primary-school teachers, women have a profound influence on forming personalities. If they are conscious of that role, they can use it for instilling in others such values as respect for others, sharing, partnership, tolerance, the peaceful solution of conflicts and problems, and a sense of justice and equality. Therefore, peace education for women is considered by many an important priority.

32. A number of organizations have held meetings related to education for peace, with a focus on changing attitudes in the family and in society, proposing that boys and girls should be educated in the same fashion so that they can become caring, cooperative and responsible members of society. They have also suggested that girls should receive more encouragement to develop interests in public matters and in non-traditional careers.

33. Women have also become involved in activities against the production and sale of war toys, which in some countries, such as Denmark, have been outlawed. Major conferences against war toys have been held in countries as diverse as New Zealand, the Philippines and the United States and in various countries in Europe. Attention has also been given to the necessity of revising school curricula and textbooks in order to replace prevailing enemy images and traditional portrayals of women with more constructive models of democratic, just and equal attitudes and relations between people of different genders, races and nationalities. Many international networks and academic activities have been initiated, including teaching about alternatives to violence, conflict resolution, partnership and the necessity of personal involvement in the promotion of peace.

34. Women researchers have contributed to the development of a concept of education for peace, linking it to non-sexist education about creating equal opportunities for the development of the talents and interests of all children, regardless of their sex, and the necessity for the eradication of all

forms of violence within the family and society. They have argued that education for peace should clearly be based on the concept of partnership between men and women. Female researchers have also pointed to the perpetuation of sex stereotypes by the media that reflect a notion that girls are passive, submissive and weak and that women are more associated with housekeeping and the advertising of goods than with public functions.

E. Women in peace research

35. The definition of peace, contained in the Forward-looking Strategies (paragraph 13), reflects the concept of peace consistently promoted by the feminist scholars, according to which:

> "... Peace includes not only the absence of war, violence and hostilities at the national and international levels but also the enjoyment of economic and social justice, equality and the entire range of human rights and fundamental freedoms within the society.
>
> "... Peace cannot be realized under conditions of economic and sexual inequality, denial of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms, deliberate exploitation of large sectors of the population, unequal development of countries, and exploitative economic relations.
>
> "... Peace is promoted by equality of the sexes, economic equality and the universal enjoyment of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. Its enjoyment by all requires that women be enabled to exercise their right to participate on an equal footing with men in all spheres of the political, economic and social life of their respective countries, particularly in the decision-making process, while exercising their right to freedom of opinion, expression, information and association in the promotion of international peace and cooperation."

36. For many women peace researchers, peace research is an inquiry into the means and possibilities of reducing violence, abolishing war and creating a just and equitable society. In these inquiries, women have emphasized the necessity of addressing violence and its traditional roots at all levels, and pointed to the interdependencies between sexism, other forms of discrimination and violence and militarism, the arms race and patriarchy. They have developed a holistic approach to peace and humanity, based on the assumption that there can be no real peace without: the elimination of all forms of oppression and discrimination; bridging the gap between the poor and the oppressed and the rich and the mighty; the application of basic principles of justice and fairness to all; participatory democracy; the utilization of all talents and abilities for human development with a human person as its objective; the preservation of a healthy environment; the demilitarization of war arsenals and people's minds; and the development of a new type of interpersonal and international relations based on partnership, tolerance and a win-win principle, instead of a win-lose one.

37. Based on analyses of women's peace activities and attitudes, many female peace researchers have advanced the following argument: Women tend to perceive things differently from men. The idea of killing is alien to women, perhaps because they are mainly associated with birth, giving life and nurturing. It is true that in certain situations women have resorted to violence

but, historically, aggressors have always been men. To women, peace means safeguarding children, home and life, rather than maintaining power, position, country, wealth or consolidating economic interests. Women as a group have never institutionalized violence nor created systems of oppression. They do not accept the logic behind military build-ups. They see all military systems as typically masculine with hierarchy and the understanding of power as a means of requiring others to obey. Women see power as the capacity to act, as ability. Thus violence reflects an absence of power. The greater power is, the less restrictive it is for the individual. This definition of power is what democracy really means. As long as a leader-dominated system is accepted there can be no real equality between people.

38. Furthermore, the women's movement is truly transnational because women's experience is universal. Women's actions for peace have been concerned with other people, particularly children; they have made use of various non-violent techniques; and have been trans-political and transnational, aimed at reaching other women from the opposing camp. Similarly, women have been concerned about the effects of military training on man's personality; women have utilized pacific images like flowers, birds or children in peace actions in contrast to the guns and war symbols used by male-dominated peace movements; and women have not asked about the political backgrounds of people joining the movement.

39. Female peace researchers are members of various academic institutions and organizations. However, in some cases, when the research questions most pertinent to women's perspectives could not be addressed within existing academic structures, women have founded their own institutions or undertaken research on their own. A women's network within the International Peace Research Association (IPRA) started holding regular meetings within the framework of the biennial conferences of IPRA.

40. Women have been able to work on behalf of peace through non-official channels to articulate their vision of what is right as well as women's deep reservations about the use of might. Women are extremely sensitive to the use of force, but they also wish to use the power of government (which applies the community's force) in positive ways. At present, most women have little direct connection with either force or decisions about it.

II. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE MILITARY

41. It is correct to say both that women have never been, and also that they have always been, a part of the military. They have never routinely participated in the military in either the numbers or ways that men have participated. Nevertheless, they have always had a role, and individual women have done everything that men have done, including lead armies.

42. The issue of women's participation in the military is often controversial. Men often resist it and most women do not insist on the importance of such equality. To place the issue in context, it is necessary first to discuss the military as an institution and its importance for women. It is then useful to discuss policies related to women's participation in the military and what is known about their actual experience.

A. The military as an institution

43. The State has been defined by Max Weber as an institution that holds a monopoly on the legitimate use of force within a geographical area. The use

of force, then, is a defining characteristic of government. Much discussion occurs about why, when, where and how force is used. Less discussion occurs about who applies the force. In most countries most force, or legal violence, is implemented by young men at the direction of older men. The institutions that exercise society's force are the military and the police. They share many characteristics but only the military will be discussed here.

44. The military varies widely. A characteristic is the wearing of uniforms and the use of weapons. In some countries, the military is understood to have a domestic function i.e. to assist in maintaining order and in providing relief from disaster. In other countries, it is understood to have a primarily outward-looking assignment, to provide for the country's security against outsiders, either by being prepared to defend against an invasion or by being stationed, and even fighting, abroad to advance the country's interests. In both cases, the basis of the role is the fact that it organizes people into a disciplined formation to apply their force to the resolution of conflicts or the solution of problems where this kind of discipline is needed.

45. In some countries, the military is an egalitarian institution, or at least one with a single promotion ladder. In others, it is clearly divided between soldiers and their officers, and it is rare for an enlisted person to become an officer or vice versa. In some countries, being in the military is a career, a way of life chosen as one chooses an occupation. In others, it is primarily a temporary service or obligation.

46. In many countries, participation is compulsory for men. In some, it is considered an onerous duty, while in other countries service represents an opportunity. In addition, military service can lead to benefits such as preference for civil service posts in civilian life. The number of people who serve in the military at any time also varies. In developed countries, the ratio of soldiers to the population is around 9:1,000. Even though they may have large armies, developing countries have a ratio of less than 5:1,000. The highest ratios are found in the Middle East, with an average ratio of 18:1,000.

47. The military accounts for a large portion of public expenditure. In some countries, military expenditures represent over 10 per cent of the gross national product (GNP), which can be the case in countries with a low GNP like Cambodia or Guyana, or countries with a high GNP like Israel or Qatar. In other countries, military expenditures are under 1 per cent of GNP as, for example, in Ghana, Iceland and Mexico. For years, USSR and the United States outspent the next largest spenders (which were France, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom) by a ratio of 8:1 even though this accounted for about 9 and 14 per cent, respectively, of GNP. 3/

48. In many countries, the military is the Government, or it periodically threatens to, or does, assume control of the Government. In other countries, the military follows the direction of an elected civilian Government. Even in these countries, however, military experience may be considered important to those who aspire to leadership in the Government. For example, in the United States, 11 presidents out of 39 had first won laurels as generals, and an additional 17 had had military experience.

49. Since the Second World War, three women, Margaret Thatcher, Golda Meir and Indira Gandhi, have been heads of Government in their countries during times of war with other countries. They have been cited as evidence that gender makes

no difference in leadership with regard to war and peace issues. However, more recently, examples can be found of women who have apparently become national leaders precisely because a civil war was in process or there was a potential for civil war and a leader was desired who preferred not to use violence and who would try to prevent others from using it. Examples include Ertha Pascal-Trouillot in Haiti, Violeta Chamorro de Barrios in Nicaragua and Corazon Aquino in the Philippines.

50. While the defining activity of the military is the approved use of force (which involves not only killing others but also risking and sometimes sacrificing one's own life), most military personnel never kill and are not killed. Indeed, one could argue that they are most "successful" when they are not used. Military personnel see themselves as peace-keepers and peacemakers, providing security and stability, both of which are important to society. International norms, however, do not accept these as ends in themselves. Rather they must be tempered by justice and the exercise of might must be right.

51. Just as the military is an integral part of the political system, many civilians are a part of the military system even if they are not a part of the military in the sense of wearing uniforms or using weapons. 4/ Economic dependence on the military can be widespread. Civilians who work for, or closely with, the military may represent a ratio of 1:2 of the uniformed force. In addition, many businesses support the military directly by contracting to provide weapons, housing, uniforms, technical expertise; others do so by providing entertainment, retail services, homes and even churches.

52. In examining the military, both those that are legally sanctioned and those that are not have to be considered. Both can be equally deadly and can be as committed either to justice or to self interest; indeed, military forces in opposition to Governments often use more women than legal armies do.

B. The importance of the military for women

53. The military is important to women in their role as citizens. Governments have a military, by definition. Most of the time this military is not involved in combat but involves considerable public expenditure. Citizens should, therefore, be concerned about the kind of military they have. Many women think of the military as "men's business" but if they are to be responsible citizens, women must examine their consent to, and support of, their country's military.

54. The historical reservation of military roles to men is the result of largely social constructions. Military service is built into male rites of passage and a male stereotype is based on the warrior or the role of protector. 5/ These stereotypes are often used as an inducement to service and as a means of maintaining discipline. They cease to be effective if women are in the military undertaking the same tasks. This helps to explain why both young men and many older men are opposed to women in the military, or, at least, are opposed to them in warrior (combat) roles.

55. The maintenance of this separation between men's and women's roles can result in a community or society in which only men serve in a role that can be called "the protector", and in which all women are assigned the antithetical role of "the protected". It has been argued that it is better to have "defenders" who are both men and women, and who have both the responsibility of protecting and the security of being protected. 6/

56. The acceptance of a protective role presupposes the existence of a threat. Some peacemakers argue that Governments and the military have a vested interest in exaggerating the nature of possible threats in order to gather more resources and to gain deference from the protected. The capacity to criticize and the energy to sustain a commitment to change almost always depend on involvement and if women are excluded from the military they will have difficulty in advocating changes in the institution. Moreover, the nature of modern war, as well as the kind of indiscriminate violence it engenders, calls into question the capacity of protectors to protect.

57. Most women tacitly support the military as a necessary institution but one that does not involve them and that permits them to distance themselves from the consequences of decisions to use force. Most women do not call for the elimination of force in society, but they are willing to have men exercise it for them. In that sense, they support force and condone men doing what they would not do or do not want to do themselves.

58. The division of roles increases the pressure on men to do whatever they perceive to be necessary to provide protection. It provides a justification for actions that might otherwise not be taken. Women's distance from war also enables them to stereotype the enemy and to avoid knowing too much about what is being done by their military on their behalf. This is similar to the distancing that occurs in a war using advanced technology, such as missiles, where the persons who may kill large numbers of people are not a risk themselves and never see the results of their actions. In terms of the use of military force, while women can withhold their consent because they lack almost all access to the use of force, whether legitimate or illegitimate, women's relationship to politics and to government is qualitatively different from men's.

59. This relationship is complicated by the fact that, as shown below, when women serve in the military their jobs often approximate civilian work; they are distinguished quite clearly from "fighting men". A problem occurs, however, when the military use high levels of technology or when they fight a long way from home. Indeed many of the persons serving abroad do so in a support rather than a combat capacity. In fact, a majority of men may actually serve with women in a support capacity. They then have to acknowledge their own non-combat or protected status, which is something they would not have to do if women were not there.

60. The asymmetry of the specialized roles of protector and protected suggests that full citizenship requires "defenders" who both protect and are protected (just as citizens are both subject and sovereign), which is not the case now. At present, it is men who are the protectors and men who are the threat, and also men who make the rules about the nature of the protection to be given.

C. Women's participation in the military

61. No systematic country data exist yet on women in the military. In order to describe the situation accurately, data would be required on the number and percentage of women serving in the military by service and rank. They would show the military assignments open to women: e.g. medical, clerical and administrative, support and combat, and also their service and rank. They would include information on women's eligibility to attend military academies, and on whether gender was integrated into service and training. They would indicate whether women and men were subject to conscription and whether pregnant women could be retained in the services.

62. The largest amount of information on women's participation in the military is available on the States members of NATO and the Western European Union. The States members of these organizations, however, have not fought a war "at home" for almost 50 years. The rules that apply are formal and have been created following regular governmental practice. Women are not conscripted although men often are; half of the countries have legislation or policies excluding women from combat, although women's service is being encouraged and is for the same length of time and the same pay and includes the same training and discipline as men. Most rules permit pregnant women to remain in military service; most provide paternal or maternal leave and half provide child care; most limit the rank that women can achieve. 7/

63. The differing rules do not yet seem to have had an effect on participation rates. Canada, which is fully egalitarian in principle, has only 12 per cent women in the military. The United States, which prohibits women's service in combat, has 11 per cent. In five of the countries, women's participation is 2-4 per cent. In 8 of the 15 countries, the participation of women is negligible.

64. Drawing on a variety of sources, one researcher has compiled data on women's military participation in 45 countries. 8/ In only three countries are women reported as making up more than 10 per cent of service members. In most countries, women perform different functions, on average, from men. For example, in Israel, where service is mandatory for women, the role and conditions of service are considerably different from those of men, and do not extend to combat. Only 10 per cent of the members of the permanent military are women.

65. Even when women may serve as regular members of a State military, there is usually a restriction on combat. A handful of countries state that the combat role is open, including Belgium, Canada, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Venezuela and Zambia. No detailed information is available for the latter two countries. In four of the other five, the grand total of women serving is less than 6,000 (a little over 1,000 per country), and the majority of them are probably not in combat units. Any change, then, has primarily been one of removing restrictions. Canada is considered to represent the major experiment in equality for it recently removed all restrictions based on gender except for service in certain submarines. Women represent 12 per cent of those on active duty and 20 per cent of those in the reserves, but few are in combat specialities. Many of the jobs that women do could be done by civilians, and in other countries are. The principal opening for women officers is as medical personnel - originally as nurses and now as doctors as well. Enlisted women tend to serve in clerical and administrative positions.

66. Less is known about the participation of women in irregular military service, although, as seen below, there is some evidence that these formations are more open to women's participation.

67. Over the last 50 years, the experience of women in the military has begun to be documented. A large part of this derives from personal narratives and historical accounts, but shows the breadth and variety of women's military experience in the twentieth century, although it is usually country-specific.

68. The practice of women's participation often differs from that which would be expected from formal policy. In the throes of national mobilization, States make decisions that they would not otherwise make. Also, while States

may wish to have a monopoly on violence, irregular forces often exist. They may fight alongside or in parallel with State forces; they may fight against a colonial enemy, or they may fight the Government. Part of the irregularity of irregular forces is that women participate in varying numbers and roles, because there are no rules.

69. There is some evidence that women's participation is "natural" in that it regularly occurs everywhere, even if it sometimes represents a small percentage of the total fighting force. Characteristically, the women who contribute directly to a war effort are noted as heroines at the time; however, they are usually forgotten when peace comes. One author has concluded that when pressed by events or in fluid circumstances, women have proved themselves equally competent, but that this has never been taken as proof of a permanent or universal ability. 9/

70. Mass mobilization occurs especially when the homeland is threatened. Russia mobilized women during both the First World War and the Second World War. 10/ In the First World War, women served in both integrated and all-women units, one of which was committed to combat apparently for the purpose of shaming deserting Russian men. During the Second World War, women were mobilized first for industry and then for the military. Perhaps 800,000 served in anti-aircraft teams, in tanks, as snipers, in combat aviation regiments and as military physicians (40 per cent of the total). Their role in the navy was minor. One lesson, then, may be that women are not called upon to do high-tech, civilian-like jobs distant from the fighting, or to participate in the mini-communities aboard ship. States see them as a reserve to be pressed into service late and then to do whatever is needed including combat.

71. Viet Nam also mobilized women extensively. 11/ Women participated in village defence units against the French and were indispensable to the transportation system in the later Viet Nam war. When the bombing of North Viet Nam began, guerrilla units were directed to increase the percentage of women in them to 50 per cent in the lowlands and 12 per cent in the minority areas. Few women, however, served in commanding positions. Similarly, partisan warfare in Yugoslavia in the 1940s involved 100,000 women soldiers and some 2 million women supporters. Like the male partisans, some 25 per cent of the female partisans died. 12/ Women were active participants in the independence war of Algeria from 1954-1962. There is documentation (probably involving an undercount) of about 3 per cent of the militants being women. Many of those were imprisoned and about the same number were killed. Following the war, however, women largely ceased to participate in the military. 13/

72. A final form of military participation involves forces committed to changing a Government. Reports suggest that women are likely to participate in large numbers on the side of change, but are less likely to be included in the organized, State military. Accounts from El Salvador, for example, report women's participation at a rate of 40 per cent and in the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) of Nicaragua, a rate of 30 per cent has been reported. 14/ Women have not been reported as participants in the military organization of the former President Somoza or in that of the Contras, both of which fought the FSLN.

73. While policy tends to be protective of women, reality is not. Wars take place where people live and those who are killed or injured are more often the unarmed than the armed. In practice, the difference is less whether women will be affected by conflict or participate in it if necessary, but rather how and under what conditions.

III. WOMEN IN UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING ACTIVITIES

74. The renewed United Nations role to assist world peace by committing resources, including a capacity to use force, to support the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations is a major development of the late twentieth century. The Organization has mounted peace-keeping efforts since its founding, but in recent years the number of these operations has multiplied.

75. Women have been active participants in many of these operations at the civilian level. In December 1992, two of the major operations (in Angola and in South Africa) were headed by women officials of the United Nations Secretariat. A relatively high percentage of civilian monitors, administrators and other personnel in major operations like Angola, Cambodia and Namibia have been women. Women have also been found among United Nations and voluntary organizations providing humanitarian relief services, often in areas in which armed conflict is taking place.

76. There is less evidence, however, that women have been significant participants among the military peace-keepers. In addition, United Nations Headquarters security staff have been sent on a number of operations, but figures have not been kept on the number of women among them. (Since security personnel are recruited locally, the United Nations does not keep statistics on the percentage of women among them.)

77. Women in the Professional category who have participated as civilians in peace-keeping operations have mostly been seconded from the regular staff of the Organization. Women are much less frequent among staff specifically appointed for mission service, a category of outside recruits. Indeed, of the group of staff appointed for mission service, on 30 August 1992, only 1 out of 42 persons in the Professional and higher categories was a woman (A/47/416, table 9A).

78. The absence of women among military personnel in United Nations peace-keeping forces reflects their absence in the military of those countries providing troops to the peace-keeping operations. There are no statistics available on the participation of women in peace-keeping generally, although they are being compiled as part of the 1995 update of The World's Women: Trends and Statistics.

79. There is anecdotal evidence that women civilian peace-keepers performed at least as well as their male colleagues in their roles, which included heading operations at the district or regional level. There was some suggestion that their methods of dealing with potential conflict were more effective, by being less confrontational, than those used by men. The role of women in recent peace-keeping operations, however, has not been systematically studied.

80. The issue of women's participation takes on a particular meaning in peace-keeping, the main purpose of which is to avoid or to defuse conflict in order to permit the peaceful settlement of disputes. This is a role that, in domestic practice, is performed more by the police than by the military. Police work has, like that of the military, been principally men's work. It has also been understood as a service occupation and, although it is a dangerous occupation, it is not one that has been seen as a path to more important positions. In police work, the single most dangerous activity has been intervention in domestic disputes. In this activity, it has been found that women police

officers are more successful than men. They seem to be more skilled at defusing tension, or in getting conflict to end pacifically.

81. As peace-keeping increases in importance, the question will need to be raised whether the exclusion, in practice, of women from many peace-keeping tasks is reasonable. Given the fact that, as it has developed, peace-keeping has characteristics related to conflict resolution that are different from traditional military roles, an increased presence of women could make these operations more effective.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

82. Women's long participation in non-governmental activities related to peace has been fruitful in organizing demonstrations, peace education and indicating alternatives to a militarized society. The focus has been on avoiding or ending violence, which is virtually always perpetrated by men. Women peace researchers have shown the common roots of all forms of violence, from family and personal violence to war, and have indicated that there can be no real peace without the elimination of all forms of discrimination and oppression. This has included advocating participatory democracy, the preservation of a healthy environment, and the elimination of instruments of war, as well as ensuring the prevalence of values and attitudes for peace and developing a new type of interpersonal and international relations based on partnership and tolerance.

83. The concept of education for peace is a way of changing attitudes in the family and society and of combating stereotyping in education. It is linked to non-sexist education and to creating equal opportunities for the development of children. It is based on instilling the notion that all forms of violence within the family and society have to be eliminated and that the overall goal is to create a just and equitable society.

84. Although women's peace activities have involved a direct struggle against publicly supported or condoned violence, their means have been limited to non-governmental activities. Generally, Governments have been reluctant to admit that non-governmental peace groups affect policy; however, they have had to take into account this expression of public opinion.

85. People have long seen Government and the military as a means of making and keeping peace. This is because they see the use of legitimate force (that agreed to by the community) as appropriate, effective and a necessary means to social order. Of course, force is most effective when it is not used. Women, both through the examination of their own experiences and the work of peace researchers, now have a more sophisticated understanding of violence. They know it is more than public, physical violence and that it includes personal and structural violence. Those who are not pacifists accept the need for institutions to enforce agreed-upon rules. They acknowledge that justice is given definition by rule makers (the Government), and that it is enforced by those having a monopoly on the use of legitimate armed force (the police and the military). They have also realized that there are few women in decision-making positions in Government and almost none in the military.

86. All citizens bear a responsibility for their country's military; however, many citizens are insulated, detached from, and able to deny, the consequences of official action or inaction. Indeed, civilians, but especially civilian

women, have so little connection with the military that it is easy for them not to acknowledge responsibility for it.

87. Fulfilling a responsibility to participate in decisions related to the use of society's force requires that women participate in Government at the decision-making level, and that they participate in the implementation of policies. Thus, they need to participate in the military and police too. They have that right under international norms enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (see General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (see General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex). The question can fairly be asked whether women would be able to achieve equality in participation in decision-making on issues of war and peace if they were denied equal access to careers in the military at all levels.

88. Experience in those countries where women have sought to exercise that right suggest that there will be deep resistance to women's full participation, resistance that is not based on either logic or empirical fact. Some of the objections related to law, equipment or physical strength can be addressed by evidence and reasoned discussion but those related to gender roles as they are traditionally expressed require an effort to examine those roles in a wider context of social and economic change.

89. This wider context includes both wider experience and role expectations for both women and men, including the experience of caring for others - children and other dependants - and the exercise of responsibility for order within the community and society: roles that tended to be divided by sex.

90. This examination can be bolstered by more systematic research into issues related to women and the peace process, including particularly the experience of women in the military. For example, States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women could be encouraged to report on their experience when examining national efforts to implement article 7.

91. There would seem to be little doubt that a more equitable balance of men and women working together would surely change the military as an institution. Some of the questions that might be raised are worthy of reflection: Would women place new items on the agenda? Would their power be magnified because of their visibility? What changes would occur in men's behaviour? Would the presence of women restrain men in their behaviour regarding non-military women? Would a restraint be placed on the kind of behaviour that has led to atrocities?

92. The United Nations has an opportunity to set an example by using men and women together in its peace-keeping operations. At the civilian level, this means implementing norms of equality in recruitment, selection and assignment. In terms of military forces, it implies encouraging those countries providing troops for peace-keeping to include women in their contingents, and to make training in peace-keeping available to them.

93. To bolster this, the possibility of studying gender aspects of recent peace-keeping and humanitarian operations, with a view to eliminating stereotypes and documenting women's contribution, should be considered. In addition, statistics on the participation of women in these operations should

routinely be collected and disseminated. As women and men begin working together, it is urgent that their effectiveness be carefully observed and reported.

Notes

1/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

2/ Scilla Mclean et al., Role of Women in Peace Movements, in the Development of Peace Research and in the Promotion of Friendly Relations Between Nations (Paris, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1980), p. 24.

3/ U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1989 (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1990), p. 33.

4/ See, especially, the work of Cynthia Enloe in Women and the Military System, Eva Isaksson, ed. (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1988).

5/ See the analysis in Judith Hicks Stiehm, Arms and the Enlisted Woman (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1989), especially in chapter 10 "Myths necessary to the pursuit of war".

6/ See Judith H. Stiehm, "The protector and the protected" in Women and Men's Wars (Oxford, Pergamon Press, 1983)

7/ See Assembly of the Western European Union, "The role of women in the armed forces", Defense Committee Report, 13 May 1991 (Document 1267).

8/ Xiaolin Li of the University of Maryland, drawing on Carolyn Becraft, Women in the Military, 1980-1990 (Washington, D.C., Women's Research and Education Institute, 1990); Isaksson, (op. cit.); Susan L. Scheuer, "Equality of rights and the Canadian armed forces: Is there a future role for female non-combatants", Defense Analysis, vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 19-29; Sandra Carson Stanley and Mady Wechsler Segal, "Military women in Nato: An update," Armed Forces and Society, 14 (No. 4, Summer 1988), pp. 559-585; Organization Division of the General Department of Political Work of the People's Liberation Army of China, Woman Soldiers in China Today (Beijing, The People's Liberation Army's Art and Literature Publisher, 1990).

9/ Anne Eliot Griesse and Richard Stites, "Russia: revolution and war" in Nancy L. Goldman, ed., Female Soldiers - Combatants or Noncombatants? (Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press, 1982), pp. 61-84.

10/ Ibid.

11/ See William J. Duiker, "Vietnam: war of insurgency" in Goldman, op. cit., pp. 107-122; and Shelly Saywell, Women in Wars (Markham, Ontario, Penguin, 1985), pp. 192-258, about the women who served with French and US forces.

12/ Barbara Jancar provides accounts both in "Yugoslavia: War of Resistance" in Goldman, op. cit., pp. 85-105, and "Women Soldiers in Yugoslavia's National Liberation Struggle, 1941-1945" in Isaksson, op. cit., pp. 47-61.

13/ Djamila Amrane, "Algeria: anticolonial war" in Goldman, op. cit., p. 124; and Marie-Aimee Helie-Lucas, "The role of woman during the Algerian liberation struggle and after" in Isaksson, op. cit., pp. 171-189.

14/ Hermione Harris, "Women and war: the case of Nicaragua" in Isaksson, op. cit., p. 191.

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PREPARATIONS FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: ACTION FOR EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The Commission on the Status of Women, at its thirty-sixth session, requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its thirty-seventh session on preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace. The present report describes progress in preparations at the national, regional and international levels, including those of non-governmental organizations.

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INTRODUCTION

1. At its thirty-sixth session, the Commission on the Status of Women, in its resolution 36/8 C, referred to a report that the Secretary-General would be preparing on preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace. Accordingly, the present report not only contains information on the status of preparations being undertaken at the national, regional and international levels of which the Secretariat has been apprised, but also information on activities undertaken by non-governmental organizations. A calendar of events for 1993 and 1994 is provided in the annex.

2. Since only information that had been received by the Secretariat prior to 4 December 1992 has been included in the present report, additional information may be made available for the consideration of the Commission at its thirty-seventh session.

I. PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

A. National level

3. In accordance with Commission resolution 36/8 B, the Secretary-General sent a note verbale to all Member States and permanent observers in August 1992 informing them of the recommendation in paragraph 2 of resolution 36/8 B, that Governments establish a national committee or designate a national focal point to initiate and promote preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Secretariat has been informed of nine such focal points or national committees having been established. While in several cases, the national machinery and its head have been designated as national committee and focal point, respectively, some countries have established new committees, which include national machinery representatives as well as those of other governmental bodies and non-governmental organizations. As national preparations are an integral part of the Fourth World Conference, it is of vital importance that activities to gather information on priority issues in each country are initiated on an urgent basis so that results can be fed into the regional preparatory conferences scheduled to be held in 1994. Accordingly, as soon as they are received, the addresses of national committees and focal points are being provided, on request, to various institutions, including potential donors. Attention is drawn to chapter II of the present report. The addresses will also be listed in the biannual publication entitled Conference 95.

B. Host country

4. The newly established China Organizing Committee for the Fourth World Conference on Women has been assigned the responsibility and task of coordinating all the bodies and each item connected to the entire preparatory work for the Fourth World Conference. Under the leadership of the State Council, the organizing members of the Committee have been drawn from 30 organs, 26 of which are ministries and state commissions. The Committee has five functional commissions: the Commission for Organization and Liaison Work; the Commission for Public Information; the Commission for Organizing the Non-Governmental Organizations' Forum; the Commission for Financial and Administrative Work; and the Commission for Safety and Security.

5. At the Interregional Workshop on the Role of Women in Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, held in Beijing, 9-15 September 1992, informal discussions were held between a representative of the secretariat of the Conference and the organizers in the host country.

C. Regional level

6. Regional activities are being initiated and coordinated by the regional commissions, most of which have held, or plan to hold, regional inter-agency meetings. While the importance of the contribution of other organizations of the United Nations system at the regional level is recognized, their activities are described under section C, "International level", below.

1. Africa

7. Under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development, which will also be a regional preparatory activity for the Fourth World Conference, is likely to be held at Dakar in September and October 1994. The venue and exact dates, however, have yet to be confirmed with the host Government.

8. Preparations for the Regional Conference will include the convening of two expert group meetings. The first will be held at Addis Ababa in May 1993, and the second one is proposed to be held in Tunisia in February or May 1994, pending agreement with the proposed host Government.

9. At the first expert group meeting of regional experts on women in development (WID), selected Government officials and African women journalists will be expected:

(a) To devise and prepare a draft plan of action for the advancement of women in Africa;

(b) To review and adopt the draft agenda for the Regional Conference, and agree on a theme for it that will focus on areas such as women in decision- and policy-making, women entrepreneurship, gender aspects of environmental and development problems, the role of national machinery in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women 1/ and preparations for the Fourth World Conference;

(c) To prepare guidelines on measures to be taken in reviewing the Forward-looking Strategies, in order to take stock thoroughly of their implementation within the African region;

(d) To use the meeting as a forum to launch a special contest for the best investigative reporting on women's issues in the African media. African media will report on the progress made in African programmes at the national level in reaching targets set by the Forward-looking Strategies. A special overview report will be compiled indicating public views and perspectives on women's issues in Africa;

(e) To discuss the preparation of documents for the Fourth World Conference, as well as national reports reviewing the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies.

10. The second expert group meeting, incorporating a Round-Table Encounter with the African press, is intended:

(a) To finalize the plan of action and adopt an African agenda;

(b) To make plans for an exhibition of materials, publications and statistical data reflecting activities and progress made in the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies.

11. In addition to the two expert group meetings, the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) of ECA will hold its annual meeting with the African Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC). The meeting, which will be held at Harare in April 1993, will have the preparation for the Regional Conference on its agenda. ARCC, which is a subsidiary organ of ECA, will draw up a plan for the preparation of the Regional Conference, including activities to be undertaken by the regional and subregional coordinating committees. The recommendations of ARCC will be presented to the ECA Conference of African Ministers that will also meet at Harara in April. ECA intends to hold a regional inter-agency meeting in May 1993.

2. Asia and the Pacific

12. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) convened an inter-agency meeting at Bangkok on 10 September 1992 on preparations for the Regional Ministerial Conference on Women in Development, which is to be held in Indonesia in May 1994 as a regional preparatory activity for the Fourth World Conference. The agencies represented at the meeting, at which non-governmental organizations were represented, pledged full support and cooperation in the preparations at both the regional and national levels. The regional conference will consist of a five-day meeting of senior officials to review and appraise the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies in the ESCAP region immediately followed by the two-day Ministerial Conference.

13. The meeting of senior officials will be devoted primarily to:

(a) A review and appraisal of the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies in the region;

(b) The formulation of a plan of action to advance the status of women in Asia and the Pacific, in keeping with the aims and objectives of the Forward-looking Strategies.

14. At the Ministerial Conference, the ministers responsible for the advancement of women in the ESCAP region will present their views on the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies in the region from the point of view of their national experience. On the basis of that exchange of views, the ministers will then consider for adoption a plan of action for the advancement of women in the ESCAP region in line with the aims and objectives of the Forward-looking Strategies.

15. Both the meeting of senior officials and the Ministerial Conference will focus on the following three major areas of concern:

(a) Women in economic development. Although women contribute significantly to development in all economic sectors throughout the ESCAP

region, women's work is generally invisible, undervalued and thus underrepresented in national accounts. Furthermore, despite the contribution of women to economic development, their concerns are not adequately reflected in development policies, plans and programmes. At the same time, women throughout the region do not benefit from economic development on an equal basis with men. Of particular importance is the fact that women have yet to be integrated into all occupations and economic sectors and to obtain conditions of work comparable with those of men. In virtually all countries and areas of the region, women on average earn far less than men. Women are typically employed at the bottom rung of the career ladder without hope of significant advancement. Owing to such circumstances, women generally remain poorly represented in economic decision-making positions;

(b) Women in social development. Gender disparities in social conditions are strikingly evident throughout the region. In most countries of the region, many more women than men are illiterate, far fewer girls than boys are enrolled in all levels of education, and far more girls than boys drop out of formal education. Women generally have less access to vocational training. Similarly, girls and women have less access to health care than boys and men, and such health care as they do receive is restricted largely to their reproductive needs. In many countries, discrimination against girls and women in favour of men is evident in the lower life expectancy rates of women, the high maternal mortality rates, the higher infant mortality rates of girls, and the higher incidence of malnutrition among girls and women. In addition to their economic contribution to the household, women generally are expected to take the main responsibility for the welfare of their families, leaving them little time for education, political participation and leisure. The gender-biased use of time within the household, as well as trends with respect to female-headed households, marital dissolution, migration and the distribution of income, resources and welfare, call for an examination of traditional concepts of the family and gender roles.

(c) Women and empowerment. Women's legal status throughout the ESCAP region is not equal to that of men, as discriminatory legislation in the social, economic and political spheres continues to exist, including provisions in the civil, penal and commercial codes and various administrative rules and regulations. Furthermore, gaps persist between legal provisions regarding the rights of women and the full realization of those rights in daily life, owing to customary discriminatory practices and the entrenched opposition of a male-oriented society. In its most virulent form, discrimination is manifested in violence against women, various forms of which have traditionally been perpetrated widely throughout the region. In recent years, violence against women, such as domestic violence, rape, forced prostitution and trafficking in women, has become more prevalent in many countries of the region.

3. Europe

16. The Economic Commission for Europe has not yet received a mandate to convene a regional preparatory conference.

4. Latin America and the Caribbean

17. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) held a Meeting of Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies of the United Nations System on Future Activities to Promote the Integration of Women into Latin

American and Caribbean Development in Preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women at Santiago on 3 and 4 September 1992. The Meeting agreed to prepare a joint publication for the Sixth Regional Conference, to be held in Argentina in 1994, on the progress made towards achieving gender equity in the region in various areas affecting women. It was also agreed as part of the preparations for the Regional Conference and the Fourth World Conference that seminars should be organized in each country to analyse the first draft of the publication prepared by the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system. In addition to fostering gender equity at the regional level, the seminars should provide an opportunity to update information on the situation of women in the countries for inclusion in the final version of the joint publication. A working group consisting of representatives of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) was formed to take charge of compiling information on gender-training activities in the region. The initial compilation will be presented to the Meeting of Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference at Santiago in November 1993.

18. ECLAC held an expert group meeting at Mexico City from 26 to 28 October 1992 to begin elaborating a new regional plan of action for women in Latin America and the Caribbean. That meeting narrowed the focus of regional preparations to the umbrella heading of "sharing of power for a better society". Afterwards the Fifteenth Meeting of Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean was held on 29 and 30 October 1992.

5. Western Asia

19. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) plans to hold its Regional Preparatory Conference in November 1994. At its sixteenth session, held from 30 August to 3 September 1992, ESCWA adopted a resolution on preparations for the Fourth World Conference, which stressed the need to strengthen national and regional institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women and appealed to States members of the Commission as well as to regional and international donors to provide financial and other support for the convening of the Regional Preparatory Conference. An expert group meeting, which will elaborate a regional plan of action, is planned for the end of 1993.

D. International level

20. Since the last session of the Commission, preparations for the Fourth World Conference have been discussed by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session in 1992 and by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. By its decision 1992/272, the Council took note of Commission resolution 36/8 on preparations for the Fourth World Conference and endorsed the recommendations contained therein. This decision was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/95 on the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies, which also expressed the Assembly's appreciation to the Chinese Government for its offer to act as host for the World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995.

21. In December 1992, the Secretary-General of the United Nations appointed Gertrude Mongella of the United Republic of Tanzania as Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference. He also announced that the secretariat arrangements for the Conference would be within the purview of the new Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development.

22. Increasing importance is being placed on inter-agency collaboration at the national, regional and international levels in general as well as in sectoral activities in particular. For example, the Global Programme on AIDS and the Safe Motherhood Initiative will certainly have an impact on the Fourth World Conference and a system-wide position paper on women, drug abuse and drug control is being planned in preparation for it.

23. The monitoring group on the second edition of The World's Women: Trends and Statistics, which is to be included in the documentation for the Fourth World Conference, met in New York on 19 October 1992. The group consisted of representatives of the United Nations Secretariat, namely, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Department of Public Information, the Publishing Division and the Department of Economic and Social Development; and of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), UNIFEM and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. Presided over by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, the group agreed on the broad outlines of the second edition, as well as its timing and financing.

24. Another example of inter-agency collaboration is the preparation of the 1994 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, information on which is contained in a separate report that is before the Commission.

25. The Commission, in its resolution 35/4, requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its thirty-seventh session, a report on existing technical and financial cooperation targeting programmes in favour of women, as well as guidelines for a comprehensive plan to overcome constraints and to increase such cooperation. In view of the widespread changes taking place within the United Nations secretariat as well as the system as a whole, the view of the organizational entities and bodies that were to be involved in the preparation of such a report was to postpone its preparation so that it could be considered by the Commission at its thirty-eighth session. Steps were taken at the informal inter-agency consultation, held at Vienna, 13 and 16 November 1992, to entrust the preparation of the first draft to the organizations most concerned with operational activities.

26. The regular inter-agency meetings on women held every year prior to the Commission are concentrating on preparations for the Fourth World Conference. Inter-sessional informal consultations were conducted in 1991 and 1992.

27. A vast number of varied activities relating to the status and advancement of women are being undertaken by various organizations within the United Nations system. Some of the more innovative ones are described in the paragraphs below as it would appear that the methods could be shared and built on by other international organizations, Governments and non-governmental organizations.

1. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

28. The Women in Human Settlements Development Programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) has embarked on collecting a series of data beginning at the community level so as to assist policy makers in their development of appropriate policies and to provide the necessary tools to communities and non-governmental organizations in their struggle to achieve a better living and working environment. Currently, a series of workshops are being held to train teams that will carry out these baseline surveys.

29. The goal is to identify the specific vital indicators needed in order to create an awareness of trends so that appropriate adjustments can be made in project implementation, design and policy as far as women's full participation in the human settlements development process and the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 are concerned. The survey will be carried out in the following countries: Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ghana, Sri Lanka, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. A team of 8-10 women in each country will be created, preferably half of which will consist of professional women and the other half community leaders. This team will be trained during a four-day workshop to carry out baseline surveys in the communities chosen. By asking a series of questions within four key areas (women's socio-economic status; access to services and infrastructure; shelter quality and adequacy; shelter regulation and discrimination; and women's participation), women's participation in the human settlements development process in a community at a particular time can be measured by using the indicators that have been developed.

30. This process is intended to collect data needed for the work of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) with women in human settlements, as well as to provide the community with a tool for improving their conditions and gaining recognition. By joining professional women together with women from the communities involved, it is anticipated that a more accurate picture of women's reality in the community will be obtained while simultaneously demystifying the idea that surveys can only be carried out and analysed by professionals. The community members will acquire a tool that they can use and, at the same time, they will be part of a process where they will become more aware of their own situation.

31. An ad hoc expert group meeting entitled "The Global Shelter Strategy in Action: Enhancing Women's Role in Community Development", was held by the Women in Human Settlements Development Programme at Nairobi in December 1992. The meeting provided an opportunity for two representatives from each country where the survey had been carried out to share and discuss findings and to plan further actions in developing and using indicators to measure women's participation in the human settlements development process at the national and regional levels.

32. The final objective of the Programme is to build collective and alternative visions for gender relations; to deepen the collective analysis of the context and the position of women at the local, national, regional and global levels; and to formulate particular strategies in order to effect change by developing analytical tools that the participants can use to evaluate the effects of development strategies for the promotion of women's strategic interests. The goal is to support the construction of a national network of women and men, who can connect into international networks and who are committed to developing the theory and practice of a gender-sensitive human settlements process.

2. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

33. The Policy on Refugee Women (A/AC.96/754) of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is based on the principle of mainstreaming or integration, which means that all programme planning and implementation should take the distinct needs and resources of refugee women into consideration as an essential part of basic needs assessment and programme delivery. The Policy aims at improving programmes by enhancing the

participation of refugees, particularly women, thereby contributing to their protection and to the delivery of goods and services appropriate to the differing needs of the population. In every region, progress has been made in ensuring that refugee women benefit at all stages in the delivery of assistance and protection programmes. Activities have also been undertaken to create more awareness on the part of staff and the public of the situation of refugee women.

34. The focus of implementing the Policy has evolved considerably during 1992 towards: providing practical advice and support at the field programme and project level; sharing initiatives with a view to replication in other regions; disseminating information on regional and sectoral women's issues; and providing feedback on country reports. In addition, field implementation of People-Oriented Planning (POP), the gender training course of UNHCR, has involved extensive monitoring and follow-up. This change of focus is a logical transition as the implementation of the Policy evolves from advocacy and formulation of policy and guidelines into the design and delivery of programmes and projects.

35. The two-day POP training course provides a framework for analysing the socio-economic roles of male and female refugees and their use and control of resources. It emphasizes a developmental and participatory approach, recognizing both the capacities and restrictions that may be implicit within the community structure for women, men and children. The approach of UNHCR sets store on an analysis of the needs of the whole community, with particular focus on women who are often neglected when refugee leaders are consulted on project planning. The Policy on Refugee Women and the Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women, which are an integral part (as training tools) of the implementation of the Policy have recently been redesigned as more readable and attractive documents to facilitate their use. Each mission undertaken by the Senior Coordinator for Refugee Women is used as an opportunity to demonstrate to UNHCR staff how to encourage women's participation.

3. United Nations Children's Fund

36. UNICEF is placing priority on equality of opportunity for the girl child with regard to health, nutrition, education, socio-cultural issues etc. and emphasizing the life-cycle approach for the empowerment of women.

4. United Nations Volunteers

37. The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is initiating a project to support the least developed countries in preparing for the Fourth World Conference. Initially, Botswana, Guinea and the Lao People's Democratic Republic are being targeted.

38. In recent years, UNV has been particularly effective in the areas of community-level support and capacity building. In the area of gender concerns and development, Volunteers have a special role to play in linking policy to practice at the community level, in work supporting non-governmental organizations and in mobilizing awareness at both the national and local levels. Experience has shown that some of the least developed countries face serious constraints in their ability to form national committees and to prepare national reports.

39. Mixed teams of three volunteers (an internationally recruited WID specialist, a statistician and a nationally recruited WID specialist) will serve in selected least developed countries where external assistance in support of preparatory activities is required. They will be attached to the nationally designated institution or ministry responsible for the country's preparatory activities for the Fourth World Conference. It is assumed that this institution or ministry would be the substantive ministry that could promote change in the status of women in the long term; if not, close collaboration with the national committee, when it is formed, would be even more vital.

40. The UNV team will be responsible for assisting the national institution or ministry in the following areas:

(a) Drawing up the terms of reference of the national committees and facilitating their identification, where possible ensuring the representation of non-governmental organizations, local community-based organizations, academics, locally influential women and, where they exist, veterans of former world conferences;

(b) Defining national and sectoral policies on gender issues;

(c) Establishing or improving on existing gender-disaggregated information systems, conducting gender analysis on issues and concerns pertaining to gender policies including: women's roles; participation in the economic process; and the impact of, and access to, current policies, procedures and services;

(d) Reviewing the legal structure as well as that of customary law and its impact on women, identifying key problem areas, and drawing up the terms of reference for a further study by a legal specialist where appropriate;

(e) Planning and designing promotional and conciousness-raising activities that would be supported by Governments and both men and women.

5. United Nations Development Fund for Women

41. Within UNIFEM, the Strategic Planning Workshop, held in 1992, began the process of establishing some strategic objectives for UNIFEM to pursue in preparation for the Fourth World Conference. First, UNIFEM will seek to strengthen women's networks and to facilitate their participation in regional preparatory activities for the Conference. For example, in order to continue the promotion of micro-macro linkages, the Asia-Pacific section is supporting non-governmental participation in the preparation of national reports and at the same time encouraging national Governments to broaden their base in drawing up these reports. A number of joint consultations are planned between national machinery and non-governmental organizations to define a reporting process and content that truly represents national interests.

42. Secondly, all UNIFEM regional sections are developing initiatives to support national machinery and their contribution to regional preparations for the Fourth World Conference. The Latin America/Caribbean section is collaborating with UNICEF to sponsor annual meetings of national machinery, which will promote capacity-building and foster information-sharing between countries on specific issues and alternative problem-solving programme areas. During 1993, the Africa section will review the current political context as well as the existing role of national machinery and emerging women's organizations.

Afterwards, regional consultations will be planned to bring together a constituency of gender researchers, national machinery and non-governmental organizations to identify viable structures based on broader partnerships for future agenda-setting. In Asia, UNIFEM will sponsor a regional consultation of national machinery to define and formulate strategies for dynamic and appropriate action.

43. A third focus will be to promote women's role in mainstream science and technology and to highlight their capacity for innovation. Working with associations of women scientists and engineers and with women's grass-root organizations, UNIFEM is working with a range of agencies to support a series of publications, workshops, videos and other materials, from which a "cutting edge" policy document will be compiled for the Fourth World Conference. Additionally, a series of workshops and events that feature women, science and technology are planned to be held by UNIFEM and its collaborators at the parallel NGO Forum.

44. A more detailed strategy and action plan will be drawn up by staff during the Strategic Planning Workshop to be held in May 1993. Furthermore, UNIFEM will be reviewing the agendas of other world conferences taking place between 1992 and 1995 in order to identify opportunities and mechanisms in which UNIFEM could contribute to international efforts to bring women's issues into focus. The Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations in 1995 is a main event that provides such opportunities. UNIFEM has further pledged its contribution to the updated edition of The World's Women: Trends and Statistics and is collaborating with UNDP to ensure that women's concerns are emphasized in the "Capacity 21" programme. Of major importance also are the decisions of UNDP to feature women as the main theme of the Human Development Report 1994 and the fact that UNIFEM has asked to assist in the preparation of the Report. Other activities will support advocacy for women through promotional materials, public relations and the preparation of media materials in collaboration with "Women's Feature Service", "Fempress", "Inter-Press Service" and others.

6. International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

45. With a view to the preparation of an updated edition of The World's Women: Trends and Statistics, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women is conducting substantive research in priority areas such as violence against women, elderly women and women's contribution to the economy.

7. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

46. A working group on WID is sensitizing all technical divisions of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to the need for a gender approach, particularly with a view to preparations for the Fourth World Conference. Progress on how WID is being incorporated into projects and programmes will be assessed and reported.

8. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

47. A task force on preparations for the Fourth World Conference is being established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to ensure an integrated approach. The national committees are very active.

9. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

48. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is focusing on women's involvement and role in the economy, especially industry, at the regional level. The role of women in ecologically sound and sustainable development is also a recent priority.

10. International Fund for Agricultural Development

49. The first meeting of representatives of the International Steering Committee on follow-up to the Summit on the Economic Advancement of Rural Women was organized from 13 to 14 October 1992 under the auspices of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The meeting was concerned with the channel to be used for providing input to the Fourth World Conference, either through the Government, through a report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations or through another United Nations body.

11. International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/GATT)

50. Working together with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the Centre will also support national machinery for the advancement of women and plans to hold regional workshops to sensitize national machinery to trade issues and to expand policy dialogue down to the grass roots.

E. Intergovernmental activities

1. Council of Europe

51. At its second meeting, held in June 1992, the Committee for Equality Between Women and Men of the Council of Europe decided to hold a special meeting in 1994 on preparations for the Fourth World Conference. This subject was also placed on the agenda of the committee's third meeting, held in Turkey in October 1992, and the secretariat of the Conference was invited to brief the meeting on the preparations under way.

2. Commission of the European Communities

52. The Commission of the European Communities together with the European Network "Women in Decision Making", in cooperation with the European Women's Lobby, held a European Summit entitled "Women in Power" in November 1992. A Declaration was adopted by the high-level women politicians who participated. The issue of power as a means of changing the structure of politics to achieve real equality seemed to emerge as one of the principal themes for the Fourth World Conference.

3. Nordic Council

53. The Nordic Council of Ministers is planning a Nordic Forum to be held in Finland from 1 to 6 August 1994. The objectives of the Forum, which is open to all, organizations, groups and individuals alike, are to follow up the development of equality since Nordic Forum 1988; to inspire those working with equality issues; to encourage future activities; to show visions of women and men in connection with attaining equality in society by the year 2000 by focusing on certain themes; to create connections across boundaries between women and women's organizations in the Nordic countries and the nearby regions

in Eastern Europe; to inspire new groups in equality work at the national and Nordic levels; to inspire young people to work for equality actively; to strengthen the extensive interest in equality issues; and to prepare the participation of Nordic countries in the Fourth World Conference. A preparatory seminar held from 23 to 25 October 1992 was attended by parliamentarians and many representatives of non-governmental organizations in the Nordic and Baltic regions. They discussed the structure of the NGO Forum to be held parallel to the Fourth World Conference: cooperation with the United Nations and the preparations of the non-governmental organizations themselves.

F. Non-governmental organizations

54. The Planning Committee responsible for preparing the NGO Forum in 1995 as well as for coordinating the contributions of non-governmental organizations to the Fourth World Conference comprises 57 international organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. The Steering Committee comprises a Convenor, a Coordinator, the Chairs of the Geneva, New York and Vienna NGO Committees on Women, the Chair of the Conference of Non-governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (CONGO), a representative of the All China Women's Federation, spokespersons of regional networks and of groups concerned with the media, fund-raising and computer communications. International non-governmental consultations will be held each year prior to the sessions of the Commission to initiate, guide and coordinate the regional preparations and activities of individual organizations. The nomination of very visible, high-level patrons has been recommended.

55. International non-governmental organizations have been requested to contact their national affiliates so that they may establish national coalitions and define national priorities. Such activities should lead to the involvement of those organizations that are participating in national appraisal processes, contributing to national reports and feeding the national concerns of non-governmental organizations into the regional preparatory process. Contact has been established with the All China Women's Federation. Studies are being undertaken in various circles to identify the real concerns of women and the obstacles they encounter to their advancement. A questionnaire has been circulated to the international non-governmental organizations that is also applicable to local use.

56. At the regional level, contacts have been made with the regional commissions and some representatives of non-governmental organizations have been identified to coordinate activities. Groups of representatives of non-governmental organizations are being formed in most of the cities of the regional commissions for coordination purposes as well as to establish regional networks and prepare for the regional forums. A regional NGO conference, including grass-root women will be convened by ESCAP late in 1993 so that the results can be made available to the regional preparatory meeting in May 1994. Non-governmental organizations have started planning for a European Forum, although there is no mandate as yet for an official regional preparatory conference. Office space will be required, especially as eight computers have been donated, which will be located in the five regional headquarters as well as in Beijing, New York and Vienna. In Addis Ababa, ATRCW has promised to provide office space. It has also been recommended that representatives of non-governmental organizations working in the locations of the regional preparatory conferences should be mobilized to network within the region in preparation for the conference.

57. In addition to the centralized activities of the Planning Committee, it is understood that some non-governmental organizations are becoming very active in their own preparations for 1995. In some countries, representatives of non-governmental organizations are participating in the national committee. Some non-governmental organizations have informed the Secretariat of specific individual plans. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is establishing a group of six women and six men representing all regions to elaborate a plan of action to remedy the current imbalance in the participation of men and women in political life. It is hoped that this group will meet during the meeting of women parliamentarians to be held by IPU at New Delhi from 12 to 16 April 1993. The United Nations-Non-Governmental Group on Women and Development, within their publishing programme, plan to issue a new book towards the end of 1993 entitled "Women, participation and decision-making" targeted on the preparations for the Fourth World Conference.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE

58. The General Assembly, in its resolution 47/95 on the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies, recommended that the Commission should consider at its thirty-seventh session the relevance to the Fourth World Conference of the resolutions drafted at the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, held at Nairobi, in order to avoid duplication of work, keeping in mind that those resolutions were neither adopted by the Conference nor considered by the General Assembly. Eighty-five resolutions were drafted at the Nairobi World Conference 2/ but no action was taken on any of them owing to the lack of time on the one hand and the comprehensive nature of the Forward-looking Strategies, which covered the concerns of Member States, on the other. Preparations for the Fourth World Conference have been made, however, on the assumption that resolutions will emanate from it and provision has therefore been made for two working groups to meet simultaneously in addition to the meetings in plenary.

59. All preparatory activities undertaken at the national, regional and international levels that are brought to the attention of the secretariat of the Conference will be publicized in Conference 95. The first issue of this biannual publication is scheduled for mid-1993 and will appear in the six official languages of the United Nations.

60. A statement of programme budget implications (E/1992/24/Add.2) containing the full estimates, which had been prepared in response to Commission resolution 36/8, section D, paragraph 1, was presented to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1992. The implications of the decisions of the Economic and Social Council were considered by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. Most of the resources required for the Conference will be included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

61. The Division for the Advancement of Women, acting as the secretariat for the Conference, is in contact with the Women in Development Bureau of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which has appointed a special Coordinator for the Fourth World Conference. Informal consultations between the DAC/WID Bureau and members of the inter-agency meeting on women are being scheduled to coincide with the thirty-seventh session of the Commission.

62. The Conference secretariat is also in contact with the Ford Foundation and other non-governmental institutions that contributed to the preparations for previous world conferences.

63. In his note verbale of 12 August 1992 to all Member States and permanent observers, the Secretary-General drew attention to the trust fund that he had established in February 1992 for the purpose of funding preparatory activities for the Fourth World Conference at the national, regional and international levels and invited contributions to be made. Contributions from Belgium, Canada and Finland to this trust fund have already been assured.

Note

1/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, Kenya, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

2/ Ibid., annex I.

Annex

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

1993

15-16 March	NGO Planning Committee Consultations, Vienna
15-16 March	Sixteenth Inter-Agency Meeting on Women, Vienna
17-26 March	Commission on the Status of Women, thirty-seventh session, Vienna
April	ECA/ATRCW/ARCC and ECA Conference of Ministers, Harare
May	Regional Expert Group Meeting on African Plan of Action, Addis Ababa
May	UNIFEM Strategic Planning Workshop
May (or June)	Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference, Caracas
9-25 June	World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna
June	First issue of Conference 95
13-17 September	Expert Group Meeting on Measures to Eradicate Violence against Women in the Family and Society, Vienna
8-12 November	Expert Group Meeting on Women in Urban Areas, Population, Nutrition and Health Factors for Women in Development, including Migration, Drug Consumption and AIDS, Vienna
November	Asian Regional NGO Workshop on WID
November	Meeting of Presiding Officers of the Latin American Regional Preparatory Conference, Santiago
December	Second issue of Conference 95
Late in year	Regional Expert Group Meeting on Western Asian Plan of Action
Late in year	Publication of the United Nations-Non-Governmental Organization Group's book: Women, Participation and Decision-making

1994

February (or May)	Regional Expert Group Meeting on African Plan of Action and Round-Table Encounter, Tunisia
March	Seventeenth Inter-Agency Meeting on Women
March	NGO Planning Committee Consultations

March	Commission on the Status of Women, thirty-eighth session, Vienna
May	Asian regional preparatory conference, Indonesia
1-6 August	Nordic Forum, Turku, Finland
5-13 September	International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo
September	Latin American regional preparatory conference, Argentina
September/October	African regional preparatory conference, Senegal
November	Western Asian regional preparatory conference
During year	Committee on Equality between Women and Men, Council of Europe